

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting September 15, 2014
Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at the Administration Building on Monday, September 15, 2014. Ms. Furtado called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following in attendance:

COMMITTEE

Bethany A. Furtado, Chair
M. Terri Medeiros, Vice Chair
Karen Bachus, Clerk
Jennifer Ahearn
Eugene A. Nadeau

Chairperson Furtado called the meeting to order and the only item on the agenda was the FY2015 budget revision. Mr. Ferrucci gave the following summary recap: At the July 8th School Committee meeting, a FY2014 Preliminary Year End fiscal report indicating the School Department achieved a Committed Funds Surplus of \$2,021,500 and an Unrestricted Funds Surplus of \$1,387,808 was presented.

At the School Committee meeting on August 10th, the School Committee Approved a Revised Budget committing the committed funds surplus AND added expenses for Professional Development Substitutes (\$30,000), Professional Development Stipends (\$250,000), which was \$50,000 less than what is recommended by Administration) and Technology Hardware (\$467,000). The added expense totaled \$747,000 and was approved by designating the use of a portion of the unrestricted surplus funds, noted above.

Based on the above actions and the trend issues school administration presented at the School Committee meeting on September 9th, outlined below is a recap of where we stand using the FY2014 Unrestricted Funds Surplus.

Unrestricted Funds Surplus-FY2014	\$1,387,808
Use of Funds in Approved Revised Budget-FY2015	< 747,000 >
Unrestricted Funds Surplus-not yet budgeted	\$ 640,808
Three trend issues raised by administration at the School Committee meeting; 9/9/14	
Additional PD Substitutes	\$ 30,000
Fully Fund Textbooks	\$176,000
Fully Fund Extra Curricula & Athletics	<u>\$250,000</u>
Additional Expenditures Recommended	\$456,000

If administrations' recommendations were to be accepted and funded by the FY2014 surplus, the unrestricted funds surplus available for further consideration would then be;

Unrestricted Funds Surplus-not yet budgeted	\$ 640,808
Use of Funds to meet Administrations Recommendations	< <u>456,000</u> >
Unrestricted Funds Surplus-Up for consideration	\$ 184,808

Over the past two months there have been a number of other unfunded district priorities raised by School Committee members the most recent being the establishment of Math Coaches at the secondary level with a preliminary projected budget of \$195,000.

At the upcoming School Committee meeting we are expecting to discuss these priorities further but, prior to considering additional uses of the unrestricted funds I must offer the following:

a) Professional Development Stipends

For the past three years we had been budgeting \$600,000 for PD Stipends paid to teachers. For FY2015 we initially cut our recommendation to \$300,000. To date we have approval for \$250,000 (8/12/14.) We are still \$50,000 short of administration's recommendation for teacher stipends.

b) Breakage and layoff savings

Currently there is an expectation to achieve salary reductions of \$3,000,000 attributed to breakage (hiring lower step placed teachers than those who retire) and by laying off and not replacing 20 teachers. We will not know if this \$3,000,000 cut is achieved until early November when we do our first FY2015 yearend projection analysis.

The following discussion took place. Dr. Siesel explained the various uses of the professional development funding and what it supports. The stipends are used for teachers to attend district-wide professional development days, one that is mandatory [held in August] and one that is voluntary [held in March]. It is also used as funds for contracted services to bring in outside experts to work with teachers on curriculum work. Dr. Siesel said PD funding is also used for stipends for teachers for after-school PD opportunities, such as grade level meetings, as well as to pay substitutes to allow teachers to get together in teams and review data or discuss curriculum work during the school day. Of the \$280,000 initially reseeded for PD, \$30,000 was designated for curriculum PD. She said that the \$30,000 for substitutes for all this work will only last through October. She said that budget managers were requesting approximately \$220,000 in additional PD funding for substitutes and stipends in the following areas: \$50,000 in English Language Arts (ELA); \$39,000 in Math/Science; \$50,000 in curriculum development; \$20,000 in technology; and \$60,000 in Response to Intervention (RTI). Commenting on the math coaches she said at a cost of \$8,000 per teacher to consult with on-site coaches, we would be limited to grades 5 through 8. The other funds [PD funds] are more important because they encompass the entire district and speak to our strategic plan. If the district could afford to hire math coaches on top of the PD funding, the department would be in favor of such a move, but if it's a choice between allocated funds to PD or math coaches, our recommendation is not to go with coaches in order to move the district forward.

Ms. Ahearn said she was having a hard time with how much time teachers miss being out of the classroom for PD training and wondered if the department needs to restructure how it administers PD. If we have coaches in the classroom, it won't affect the kids because the coaches will be working with the teachers as they teach. Dr. Siesel responded that in order for all teachers to have a common understanding of what to look for and develop assessments, we need to pull teachers out at one time. The kids may be negatively impacted for one day, but the teachers return with a better idea of what to look for.

Ms. Furtado suggested fully funding textbooks and sports and extracurricular activities, and supporting all PD requests by half of what is being asked for at \$110,000, which would leave approximately \$74,000 in discretionary surplus funding available. She said by spending half of what we have now, working with a living, breathing budget, and starting to reseed professional development would be beneficial to students and teachers. Dennis Mullen said any cut to sports and extracurricular activities would have a negative impact. If \$250,000 is cut, sports would end after the winter season. If you cut it by \$125,000, we could start the spring season but we may not finish it. Dr. Monaco also was concerned if the professional development funds were not restored. She said with any big change, you need to continue to nourish that change, and if we cut funds, you will see a waste of years worth of work because it would come to a stop.

Ms. Ahearn said she felt both PD and the math coaches were important, and asked about moving money from textbooks and using it to hire math coaches. Dr. Siesel said the majority of the book budget is in Social Studies to buy a classroom set of books, versus one per student, and use the rest of the money to

purchase online support materials that all students and teachers can use. Online resources are constantly updated and better aligned.

Mr. Ferrucci said the department is projected to achieve approximately \$3 million in savings through breakage, or teacher retirements and layoffs, but he won't have the final numbers until November. He said if the savings is achieved, it doesn't mean an additional \$3 million of surplus funds. If the savings is achieved, it would leave the department with \$74,000 of uncommitted surplus that could be allocated to any priority. If the savings is not achieved, the \$74,000 would be the first piece to make up the difference, and if additional funds were needed, further cuts would have to be made.

MOTION 2014-255: Moved by Ms. Furtado, based on information and recommendation by the administration, we increase additional professional development by \$110,000 for a total of \$140,000, fully fund textbooks [\$176,000] and fully fund curriculum and athletics [\$250,000] for a total of \$566,000, seconded by Ms. Medeiros.

MOTION PASSES (4 ayes 1 nay)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye	Karen Bachus – Nay
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye	

Ms. Furtado said the committee would revisit the situation in November.

MOTION 2014-256: Moved by Mr. Nadeau, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye	M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye	Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye	

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.